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TAGS: [EUN](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ZL](#) [AFIN](#) [SU](#) [ZI](#) [UP](#) [BO](#) [GR](#)  
SUBJECT: GREEK VIEWS ON JANUARY GAERC ISSUES

REF: A. SECSTATE 4297  
[1](#)B. SECSTATE 5430

Classified By: A/POLCOUNS JEFFREY HOVENIER. REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) DepPolCouns discussed ref A and B GAERC issues with newly arrived MFA European Correspondent Niki Kamba. Kamba said the Czech EU Presidency had decided on a policy of downsizing GAERC agendas and focusing more intently on one or two issues. Thus, they had eliminated most of the issues contained in our demarche from consideration at the January 26-27 meeting and would focus discussion instead on the situation in Gaza and the Middle East. Additional items that would be discussed at the FMs' lunch included EU/Ukraine, EU/Russia, and the European response to President Obama's announcement on the closing of the detention facility at Guantanamo.

#### GAZA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

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[1](#)2. (C) Kamba said there was little disagreement amongst EU members on the goals in the Middle East: a way needed to be found to ensure the ceasefire in Gaza was permanent and that the peace process got back on track. The EU and others also needed to face squarely the humanitarian situation. It would be difficult to stop arms smuggling, and Egypt was not accepting refugees. In terms of the broader Peace Process, there was no shortage of initiatives on the table, but the events in Gaza had set things back and it would be difficult to regain momentum. The EU welcomed President Obama's calls to Middle East leaders on his first day at work and hoped this indicated the degree of active engagement the new Administration intended to maintain. Kamba also mentioned that Greece had donated 600K euro in humanitarian aid and intended to host 20 Palestinian children in Greek hospitals.

#### OTHER ISSUES

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[1](#)3. (C) During the lunch, FMs would discuss EU relations with Russia and Ukraine. Kamba noted that an EU-Russia summit would be taking place at some point, though no date had yet been set. The lunch discussion would focus on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) and how to get it back on track after the hiatus following the Russian invasion of Georgia last summer. On Ukraine, discussion would focus on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and the February 5 meeting between Ukraine and the EU Troika, which now consisted of the Presidency, Commission, and Council, not the former, current, and future Presidencies, as had previously been the case.

[1](#)4. (C) Lunch discussion would also touch on the closing of the detention facility at Guantanamo. Kamba said the EU liked what it heard from President Obama about suspending military trials and wanted to find ways to assist the new Administration in reaching its goal of closing the facility. The lunch discussion would be a "brainstorming session," but she expected it to be "preliminary" at this early stage.

¶5. (C) Kamba mentioned that there would be no discussion of Zimbabwe, but conclusions had already been agreed. Sanctions would be renewed and the names of more individuals would be added. At the same time, it was important to stop the trade in illicit diamonds, which was helping keep the Mugabe regime afloat.

¶6. (C) Finally, regarding Belarus, Kamba said that the EU was looking forward to its May 7 summit with eastern partners, which may or may not include Belarus depending on Lukashenka's willingness to implement meaningful reforms.  
SPECKHARD